



Hawai'i Psychological Association

For a Healthy Hawai'i

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Telepsychology Quick Start Guide

Below are step-by-step instructions to assist our members incorporate telepsychology into their practices as quickly and easily as possible.

It is extremely important that any practitioner who wants to provide therapy via telehealth carefully think through the safety issues, back-up plans, privacy issues, treatment considerations, patient selection, and technical issues involved *before* embarking on a telehealth practice, as part of practicing ethically within your scope of training and expertise. For those who would benefit from some telehealth training here are some resources from the American Psychological Association:

- [Guidelines for the Practice of Telepsychology](#)
- [CE Corner: Telepsychology](#)
- [Telepsychology Best Practice 101 Series](#)
- [Office & Technology Preparation Checklist](#) (at the end of the instructions below)
- [Telepsychology Informed Consent](#) (at the end of the instructions below) - reviewed by several practicing psychologists and attorneys, simply add your own letterhead

Other useful telehealth resources:

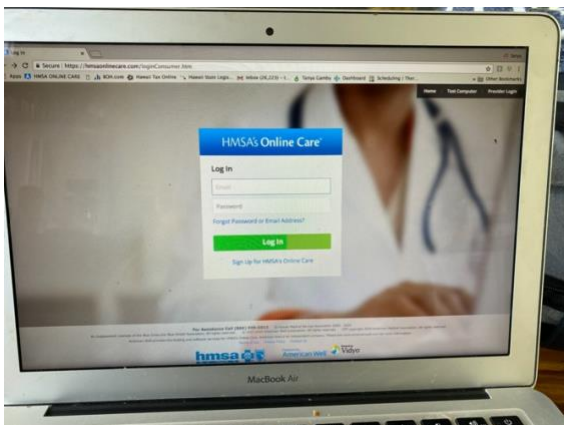
- [Special National Register Webinar Fri Mar 20: Telepsychology & COVID-19](#)
- [How Much Internet Bandwidth You Actually Need to Work from Home](#)
- [Hawaii Revised Statutes 453-1.3 Practice of telehealth.](#)

INSTRUCTIONS

HMSA ONLINE CARE:

If you are an HMSA provider, go to: www.hmsaonlinecare.com

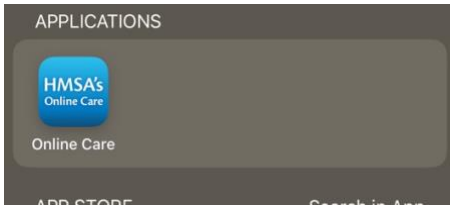
1) Click on the upper right hand side where it says: "Provider Log In"



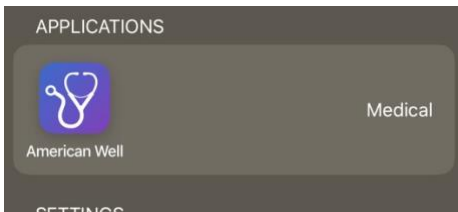
2) At the Provider Log In page, below the "Log In" button is a "Register Now" link.

3) Click on the “Register Now” link and sign up as a provider.

4) Have your clients go to: www.hmsaonlinecare.com and have them register as patients (patients can log in on the website or they can download the “HMSA Online Care” app and log in on their smartphone or tablet)



5) At your scheduled appointment time, either log in as a provider through the HMSA website (or you can download the HMSA app for providers called “American Well”) and login on your smartphone or tablet



6) When your client logs on, they can then search for your name as a provider. When they find you and click on your name, you will see their name appear in your virtual waiting room. (Make sure you are in your “HMSA Online Care Behavioral Health” account, not the “HMSA Online Care Kiosk” – if relevant to your account, you can toggle between them in the “Change Account” tab at the top of your provider screen.)

7) HMSA will handle collecting co-pays from the patient if relevant (so you do not collect co-pays from your patients for these sessions).

8) Click on the patient name and it will walk you through the steps to launch the video connection so the visit can begin.

8) At the end of the visit, you will be asked to complete a session note (called a “Wrap-Up”). The only field you are required to complete for reimbursement in the Wrap-Up is the Diagnosis* (you can maintain your full progress notes for these sessions however you do so for all your other sessions). When that Wrap-Up is completed, HMSA will automatically send you payment (so you do not submit any claims for these sessions).

**The information in the Wrap-Up is seen by the client and any other treating providers, so it is recommended that unnecessary or personal details not be included.*

OTHER INSURANCE COMPANIES:

For non-HMSA members (or when HMSA online care is glitchy and alternative is needed), you can use a HIPAA compliant video conference website. Here is APA’s recent review of some popular telehealth options: [Comparing the Latest Telehealth Solutions](#)

When you use a HIPAA compliant telehealth video portal you use your normal CPT code + modifier 95 (e.g. 90834 + 95) and a location code of 2 (for telehealth).

At this time, it is our understanding that HMSA, UHA, Veterans Choice (PC3), and TriCare, all permit for telehealth as long as it is billed/coded appropriately and ethically delivered.



Screen your patient(s) to determine whether video-conferencing services are appropriate for them.

- Consider patient's clinical & cognitive status – can the patient effectively participate?
- Does the patient have technology resources for a video-conference – e.g. webcam or smartphone?
- Consider patient's comfort in using technology – can they login and effectively use the technology?
- Does the patient have physical space for a private telepsychology session?
- Is parent/guardian permission required? If so, obtain it.
- Consider patient safety (e.g., suicidality) and health concerns (e.g. viral risk; mobility; immune function), community risk, and psychologist health when deciding to do tele-sessions instead of in-person.

Technology:

- Is your technology platform consistent with HIPAA-compliant practices?
- Do you have a Business Associate Agreement (BAA) for that technology vendor?
- Do you and the patient have adequate internet connectivity for video-conferencing?
- Did you discuss with the patient how to login and use the technology?
- Are you using a password-protected, secure internet connection, not public or unsecured WiFi? What about your patient? (If not, it increases the risk of being hacked.)
- Did you check that your anti-virus/malware is up-to-date to prevent being hacked? What about your patient?

Office Set-up:

- Is the location private? Is it reasonably quiet?
- Make sure the room is well lit. Example: a window in front of you might cast a shadow or create low visibility.
- To improve eye contact, position your camera so that it's easy to look at the camera and the patient on screen.
- Consider removing personal items or distractions in the background.
- Check the picture and audio quality. Can you see and hear each other? Make sure nobody is muted.
- As much as possible, both people should maintain good eye contact and speak clearly.

Pre-session:

- Psychologist should be competent to deliver tele-health services. Consider taking the [“Telepsychology Best Practice 101”](#) online CE course. Review APA's [Telepsychology Practice Guidelines](#).
- Discuss the potential risks/benefits of telehealth sessions with the patient(s).
- Get a signed informed consent from your patient(s) or patient's legal representative. If the psychologist or patient is quarantined, informed consent must be signed electronically; consider [DocHub](#) or [DocuSign](#).
- Do you have a back-up plan in case of technical difficulties? In case of a crisis situation? What contact information do you have? Do you know the local resources (e.g. ER) where the patient is?
- Did you discuss how this session will be billed? Will the patient be billed if late/no-show?
- In the case of minors, determine where the adult will be at that location.

Beginning of virtual session:

- Verify the patient's identity, if needed.
- Confirm patient's location and a phone number where the patient can be reached.
- Review importance of privacy at your location and patient's location.
- All individuals present for the virtual visit must be within view of the camera so the psychologist is aware of who is participating.
- Confirm that nobody will record the session without permission.
- Turn off all apps and notifications on your computer or smartphone. Ask patient to do the same.
- Conduct the session mostly like you would an in-person session. Be yourself.

[YOUR LETTERHEAD HERE]

INFORMED CONSENT CHECKLIST FOR TELEPSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Prior to starting video-conferencing services, we discussed and agreed to the following:

- There are potential benefits and risks of video-conferencing (e.g. limits to patient confidentiality) that differ from in-person sessions.
- Confidentiality still applies for telepsychology services, and nobody will record the session without the permission from the others person(s).
- We agree to use the video-conferencing platform selected for our virtual sessions, and the psychologist will explain how to use it.
- You need to use a webcam or smartphone during the session.
- It is important to be in a quiet, private space that is free of distractions (including cell phone or other devices) during the session.
- It is important to use a secure internet connection rather than public/free Wi-Fi.
- It is important to be on time. If you need to cancel or change your tele-appointment, you must notify the psychologist in advance by phone or email.
- We need a back-up plan (e.g., phone number where you can be reached) to restart the session or to reschedule it, in the event of technical problems.
- We need a safety plan that includes at least one emergency contact and the closest ER to your location, in the event of a crisis situation.
- If you are not an adult, we need the permission of your parent or legal guardian (and their contact information) for you to participate in telepsychology sessions.
- You should confirm with your insurance company that the video sessions will be reimbursed; if they are not reimbursed, you are responsible for full payment.
- As your psychologist, I may determine that due to certain circumstances, telepsychology is no longer appropriate and that we should resume our sessions in-person.

Psychologist Name / Signature:

Patient Name:

Signature of Patient/Patient's Legal Representative:

Date: